

agencies should have no authority to use these processes as a mechanism to strip rights from lawful water users.

We urge Congress to pass H.R. 3189 and we are happy to provide further support for this effort as necessary.

Cordially,

TIMOTHY V. CORRIGAN,
DOUGLAS B. MONGER,
STEPHEN K. IVANCIE.

RIO GRANDE WATERSHED—ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS,
North Center, CO, October 25, 2013.

Re Support of the Water Rights Protection Act H.R. 3189

Hon. DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman, Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Ranking Member, Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HASTINGS AND RANKING MEMBER DEFAZIO: The Rio Grande Watershed Association of Conservation Districts (RGWACD) strongly support the Water Rights Protection Act (WRPA), (H.R. 3189). RGWACD is dedicated solely to representing the roughly 2,000 ranchers who operate on federal lands, some of which are U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands. Here in the San Luis Valley of Colorado, RGWACD is one of the most active conservation district—watershed groups in Colorado. We represent all faction of agriculture producer and landowner who provide much of the nation's supply of food and own or manage a large portion of America's private property. Many of our members also hold private water rights on federal lands, which serve as an integral part of their operations; thus, these water rights keep our members in business and rural communities thriving. However, landowners face an unprecedented threat to the future of their water rights on lands managed by the USFS.

The USFS has been notorious for violating private property rights, as they have recently attempted to require the transfer of privately owned water rights to the federal government. The USFS has not provided adequate compensation as required by Article V of the Constitution; instead, they have attempted to acquire these rights in exchange for special use permits, likely in violation of a recent Supreme Court ruling in *Koontz*. Furthermore, the USFS has repeatedly ignored established state water laws in order to perform these takes, which amounts to a vast overreach by the federal government.

H.R. 3189, introduced by Congressmen: Scott Tipton (R-Colo.), Mark Amodei (R-Nev.), Rob Bishop (R-Utah), Tom McClintock (R-Calif.), and Jared Polis (D-Colo.) comes as a means to combat the recent directive that allows the USFS to execute the seizure of these water rights without just compensation. The language in the directive is applicable to ski areas specifically; however, this issue is a threat to all water users, including ranchers, as they depend on these rights to keep their business viable.

This legislation would prohibit the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from, requiring the transfer of water rights without adequate compensation. Additionally, the bill supports long-established state water laws, clarifying that the federal government does not have jurisdiction.

We strongly encourage the Natural Resource Committee to support this important legislation. We thank you for your attention to this crucial issue, and for supporting our members as they continue to be an essential

part of rural communities and stewards of our public lands.

Sincerely,

HAROLD ANDERSON,
President.

RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
Alamosa, CO, October 15, 2013.

Hon. SCOTT TIPTON,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE TIPTON: One of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District's purposes is "for the conservation, use and development of the water of the Rio Grande". We understand that there has been an attempt by certain federal agencies to require federal permittees to assign their private water rights to the federal government as a condition of the permit. If this policy continues it will create a great risk to the water users both in the San Luis Valley and statewide. The Rio Grande Water Conservation District supports H.R. 3189, The Water Rights Protection Act, and will work with you to garner support for this bill to ensure protection of privately owned water rights from claims by federal agencies.

As we understand, H.R. 3189 was introduced as a means to protect water users from the seizure of privately owned water rights without just compensation. We believe that H.R. 3189 grants no new rights to any party, nor does it in any way infringe on existing rights of individuals, states or the federal government. It appears to us that this legislation simply reaffirms what has been existing law for generations and which is expressed in numerous places in federal law, including the Mining Act of 1866; the 1897 Organic Act establishing the U.S. Forest Service; the Taylor Grazing Act; and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The bill supports long-established recognition of the primacy of state water law and the title to water rights that are established thereunder.

We are aware of no provision in federal statutory law authorizing or permitting the Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management to compel owners of lawfully acquired water rights to surrender those rights or to require that they be in the name of the United States. H.R. 3189 does nothing more than assure holders of BLM or Forest Service permits that their lawfully acquired water rights will not be abridged and that federal agencies may not use the permit process to acquire water rights that are owned by non-federal entities.

We thank you for taking a leadership role in addressing this crucial issue and look forward to working with you on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

STEVEN VANDIVER,
General Manager.

TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD, CALIFORNIA ON THE OCCASION OF THE CITY'S 60TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF INCORPORATION

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2014

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the City of Lakewood, CA and ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating its residents on the city's 60th Anniversary of Incorporation. I am proud

to represent this prospering city—aptly characterized by its motto, "Times Change, Values Don't"—as part of the 38th Congressional District of California.

The City of Lakewood incorporated in 1954, and was the largest planned community in America in the early 1950s. Lakewood was designed to be a livable residential community, with parkways along major roadways to protect children from traffic, a regional shopping center in the middle of the town, and convenient neighborhood shopping places at major intersections.

The City of Lakewood has been known for its careful fiscal management and prudent budgeting. In 1954, the City began to utilize innovative partnerships in contracting for city services. Lakewood's "contract plan" for local government was soon copied in a wave of incorporation movements in Los Angeles County, and later throughout the state. Today, Lakewood is known as a "contract city" and currently contracts for a broad range of services from the County, other agencies, and private firms; including law enforcement, street repairs, fire protections, library services, trash collection and others. This allows the city to provide more efficient and cost-effective services to its residents.

Prioritizing the best interests of its residents, in 2013 Lakewood was able to complete a 12-year street repaving program in which 100% of the city's 143 miles of residential streets were resurfaced with long-lasting rubberized asphalt. The 100 percent completed program—almost unheard of among cities—earned a "Project of the Year" award from the American Public Works Association.

The City of Lakewood thrives on customer service and strives to ensure all resident requests are responded to in a timely manner. In addition, Lakewood takes pride in the fact that city staff has deep roots in the community; many employees were raised here and continue to live in the city. The average employee has worked for the city for many years, maintaining a valuable level of experience and loyalty to the residents of Lakewood.

A top quality recreation service for residents of all ages is a core Lakewood value. In the 1950s, to deal with the surge of young children needing play opportunities after school, the city developed the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) program staffed by an army of volunteer coaches. LYS and its volunteer coaches provided the supervised play activities that the new families of Lakewood needed. LYS continues to be a key way that Lakewood residents work with their city government to give their children great recreational opportunities. In 2013, for the fourth year in a row, Lakewood was named "Playful City USA" by the national recreation advocacy group KaBoom! in recognition of the city's top quality parks, playgrounds, and programs to encourage youth and family play.

The City of Lakewood was recently considered one of the safest communities in the region, and has seen many innovations and notable achievements in public safety over the years. In the 1980s, Lakewood developed one of the largest Neighborhood Watch programs in California. The city continues to have a prospering program with currently over 400 block captains. Lakewood residents have a tradition of volunteering to help their community and their neighbors in need. Lakewood is the home of many charitable efforts that support a caring community and enhance the

quality of life. Prominent efforts include Project Shepherd, Volunteer Day, Meals on Wheels, Pathways Volunteer Hospice, Friends of the Lakewood Libraries, Lakewood Education Foundation and many more.

The city will be celebrating their 60th anniversary of Incorporation with an open house that will include galleries of historic photos from city archives, portraits of original 1954 homeowners, and other photographs submitted by residents. As the city celebrates this occasion, I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the city and residents of Lakewood as they celebrate the past and focus on a prosperous future.

RECOGNIZING THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH IN PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the One Hundredth Anniversary of Macedonia Baptist Church of Pensacola, Florida. Throughout the one hundred years of its presence, the pastoral leadership and congregation of Macedonia Baptist Church has provided uplifting and spiritually fortifying service to the Gulf Coast region, and I am privileged to honor their dedication to the Northwest Florida community.

Macedonia Baptist Church traces its roots back to the inspiration of Mother Lula Farris in 1913. Established as Long Faith Baptist Church in 1914 with Reverend Holmes as its first pastor, the church's name was later changed to Macedonia Baptist Church of Pensacola, Florida.

The strength of the congregation and its leadership throughout the church's history is exemplified through its continued growth and commitment to achieve excellence in providing Biblical guidance and Christian education. An integral part of the Baptist Church community, Macedonia Baptist Church has served in various roles, including its active participation in the Florida General Baptist Convention and the licensing of several pastors.

Today, and remarkably for the last 63 consecutive years, Macedonia Baptist Church has been led under the devoted guidance of the Reverend A.L. Durant, Sr., and as a true testament to God's work through His people, the church continues to build God's kingdom and foster spiritual and professional growth by providing religious direction and philanthropy to church members and the surrounding community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it gives me great pleasure to commemorate the centennial anniversary of Macedonia Baptist Church in Pensacola, Florida. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating their pastoral leadership and congregation. May the Spirit of the Lord continue to bless the church on this important milestone and the many to come.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 3189

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2014

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following:

ASPEN SNOWMASS,
ASPEN SKIING COMPANY,
Aspen, CO, October 11, 2013.

Re Support for H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act

HON. DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN: I am writing on behalf of Aspen Skiing Company, a four-season resort in Aspen and Snowmass Village, Colorado. We employ 3,600 people in winter and host 1.3 million visitors at our four ski mountains, 18 restaurants and two hotels. Most of our operations take place on National Forest System lands under a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service.

As you are likely aware, the USFS is trying to require the transfer of privately held water rights to the federal government as a permit condition on National Forest lands. There is no compensation for the transfer of these privately held rights despite the fact that many stakeholders have invested millions of their own capital in developing the rights.

I'm writing in support of H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act, to address this

unfair situation. This bill would prevent the federal government from making an end run around state law by taking water rights that it does not own through its permitting authority.

Thank you for scheduling a hearing on H.R. 3189 and for your leadership on this issue. It means a great deal to Aspen Skiing Company and other Colorado ski resorts operating on federal lands.

Best Regards,

DAVID PERRY,
Senior Vice President.

TRUCKEE-CARSON
IRRIGATION DISTRICT,
Fallon, NE, March 13, 2014.

Re Support for "Water Rights Protection Act" (H.R. 3189)

Hon. SCOTT TIPTON,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN TIPTON: On behalf of the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District (a political subdivision of the State of Nevada), we here express our formal and strong support for your "Water Rights Protection Act" with amendments thereto proposed by you and the Honorable Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma. This legislation signals important recognition and protection to that very special form of property right which allows the use and control of waters for beneficial uses by water right holders. This legislation will prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture. We applaud this measure.

Moreover, this Act protects communities, businesses, recreation, farmers and ranchers, and others who rely on privately held water rights for their livelihood from what constitutes a taking without compensation. Our District serves only water users that directly hold their water rights. To all such, these rights are not just important; rather, they are sacred. No justification may be made, no matter how decorative may appear its veneer, for essentially condemning a private property interest, without compensation, for expanded uses by the federal government.

Thank you for your efforts to protect water rights. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

RUSTY D. JARDINE, ESQ.,
District Manager, Truckee-Carson Irrigation District.